

R E M A R K S

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. Claims 17 and 18 have been added.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

The subject application was discussed with the examiner during a personal interview on March 22, 2004. As an initial matter, the undersigned would like to thank the examiner for his helpful suggestions and for the courtesies extended during the interview.

Pursuant to MPEP 713.04, the following interview summary is provided.

- a) No exhibits were shown.
- b) Claims 1-16 were discussed.
- c) Prior art references 5,353,748 and 6,041,743 were discussed.
- d) Amendments to claims 1 and 7 were discussed. The addition of the limitation "10 ppm at 0% O₂ in the exhaust gas, dry basis" to claims 1 and 7 was discussed.
- e) The general thrust of the arguments presented was that the prior art did not disclose the invention required by at least claims 3-6 and 9-16.

RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED IN OFFICE ACTION

The Office Action dated January 22, 2004, has been received and carefully reviewed, and the issues raised therein discussed with the examiner during an interview on March 22, 2004. Certain objections were raised in connection with the specification. By the above amendment, these objections have been addressed by adopting the examiner's suggestions.

Addition objections to the form of claims 4 and 15 were raised. This formal objection has been addressed, as agreed during the interview, by removing the parentheses from the phrase "at 0% O₂ in the exhaust gas, dry basis" in claims 4 and 15.

Claims 3, 6, 9 and 12 were indicated in the Office Action to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 3 and 9 have been rewritten in this manner. As noted below, the claims from which claims 6 and 12 depend are believed to be in condition for allowance; therefore claims 6 and 12 should also be allowable as written.

Claims 1, 7, 10 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takubo. As discussed during the interview, Takubo does not teach each limitation required by claims 10 and 16 and therefore these claims are allowable over Takubo. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to include the limitation "thereby keeping NO_x value not more than a specified

value 10 ppm at 0% O₂, in the exhaust gas, dry basis." As discussed during the interview, this amendment should also place claims 1 and 7 in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 13-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Kayahara (5,353,748). As discussed during the interview, claims 4, 5, 10, 11 and 13-15 are allowable as written. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation "thereby keeping NO_x value not more than a specified value 10 ppm at 0% O₂, in the exhaust gas, dry basis" which should make claim 1 and its dependent claim claim 2 allowable. Claim 7 has also been amended to include this limitation thus making claim 7 and its dependent claim 8 allowable.

New claims 17 and 18 have been added to further define the subject invention. Claim 17 requires a specific structure for reducing combustion gas temperature in such a manner that suppression of NO_x generation is preferred to reduction of exhaust CO value, thereby keeping NO_x value not more than a specified value. Claim 18 requires a different specific structure for reducing combustion gas temperature in such a manner that suppression of NO_x generation is preferred to reduction of exhaust CO value, thereby keeping NO_x value not more than a specified value. The addition of such structures to claim 1 was discussed in general terms during the interview to

distinguish claim 1 over the prior art. For this reason, it is believed that these limitations make claims 17 and 18 allowable.

Each issue raised in the Office Action dated January 22, 2004, has been addressed, and it is believed that claims 1-18 are in condition for allowance. Wherefore reconsideration and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

CONCLUSION

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.


If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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